

The Dēnkard Account of the History of the Zoroastrian Scriptures

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The history of Zoroastrianism has, ever since the inception of Iranian studies in the West, been the focus of attention of many scholars. Although it is over a century since all known internal and external evidence have been employed in its assessment, unfortunately we still lack a satisfactory edition of some of the Middle Persian texts on this subject; hence a fresh attempt at their interpretation is generally considered to be a desideratum.

The traditional account of this history coming from the home of the Avesta is set forth in four different passages in Pahlavi literature, of which one is to be found in the *Ardāy Wirāz-nāmag* and the rest in the *Dēnkard*, including the present text which is by far the most significant and detailed of the three, dating from the middle of the sixth century and bearing the stamp of historicity and authenticity.

The pioneering interpretation of this text was essayed by M. Haug,¹ who was soon followed by E. W. West.² After a lapse of half a century H. W. Bailey³ re-examined part of the text giving at the same time a rather full transcription of the passage which proved to be an incentive to further investigation by R. C. Zaehner and some other scholars. However, it was Zaehner who undeterred by numerous pitfalls made a commendable effort to penetrate the secrets of various involute Pahlavi texts, amongst them the present one.⁴ In spite of certain conjectural readings, on which he has not concealed his misgivings, he has given a fair idea of the fundamental thoughts of the passage. Of special interest is the contribution to the interpretation of this text by Mary Boyce, who, in quoting various passages from the Zaehner's translation, has in a good many instances either improved upon them or pointed out the moot questions.⁵ The greater part of the four afore-mentioned texts are reproduced by H. S. Nyberg in his *Mn I*.⁶ His reading and interpretation of their lexical and phraseological elements are interspersed among the entries of *Mn II*.⁷

¹ Haug, *Essay on Pahlavi, The-Pahlavi-Pazend Glossary*, Bombay, 1870, p. 145.

² West, *SBE, PT*, IV, pp. 412—418.

³ Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth Century Books*, 1943, pp. 218—219.

⁴ Zaehner, *Zurvan, a Zoroastrian Dilemma*, 1955, pp. 8—9; 31—34.

⁵ Boyce, *Zoroastrians — Their Religion, Beliefs and Practices*, 1979.

⁶ H. S. Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi*, Part I: Texts 1964, pp. 107—112.

⁷ H. S. Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi*, Part II: Glossary 1974.

DkM, 412.3—415.3:

*Dārāy ī Dārāyān hamāg abistāg ud zand čeōn Zardušt az Ohrmazd padirift nibištāg¹ 2 pačēn yak pad ganj ī *šāhigān(?)² yak pad diz ī nibišt dāštan framūd.*

Valaxš ī Aškānān abistāg ud zand čeōn abēzagihā andar mad ēstād hammōg-iz ī aziš har čē az wizend ud āšuftkārīh ī Aleksandar ud ēwar ud rōb ī Hrōmāyān andar Ērānšahr pargandagihā abar nibištāg tā³ čē uzwān abespārīšnīg pad dastwar mād ēstād andar šahr čeōn frāz mad ēstād nigāh dāštan ō šahrīhā[i] ayādgār kardan framūd.

*ōy bay Ardašir šāhān šāh ī Pābagān pad rāst dastwarīh(ī) Tōsar ān-iz hammōg ī pargandag hamāg ō dar x^aast. Tōsar abar mad ān ī *ēwar⁴ frāz padirift ud abārīg as dastwar hišt. ud ēn-iz framān dād ku frāz ō amāh har nigēzišn ān ē⁵ bawēd az dēn māzdēsn čē nūn-iz āgāhīh ud dānišn aziš jrōd nēst.*

¹ Zaehner, *op. cit.*, 31, unwarrantedly emends to *nipištan*; cf. *AWn*, Nyb. Mn I, 107.7: *abistāg ud zand abar gāw pōstihā ī wirāstag ud pad āb ī zarr nibištāg* "the Avesta and Zand written with golden ink on prepared cow hides", which, similar to the *Dk* account implies that the Scriptures were already committed to writing.

² MS *špykⁿ*, the word, as it is pointed out by West, *ibid.*, 413n. 4, occurs seven times in the *Dēnkard*, five times as *špykⁿ* and twice as *šspykⁿ*. Markwart, *Cat.* 108—110, has read *Ščikān*, belonging to *Šič* (i.e. Lake Urmīya), referring to the town of Ganjag which was later called *Šiz* in the Islamic era. He is followed by Christensen, *L'Iran*, 137, n.1, "*Šizigān*", and Nyberg, *Mn* II, 186, "*Ščikān*". However, the MP form of the lake *čāčasta-* is *čēčast*, *GBd*, Ankl. ch. 10.1, which may have been contracted to *čēč* or *čēs* (*jis* in *Yāqūt* III, 354), not *Šēč* or *Šiz*, which is the Arabicized form. Bailey, *ZP*, 230, has read *ša(sa) pikān*, followed by Zaehner, *ibid.*, 31; de Menasce, *Le troisième livre de Dēnkard*, 379; MacKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary*, 79, to quote only a few. Not even this conjecture is quite convincing, since the Middle Iranian forms for the satrap are *Phl. štrp*, *IMP štlp*, *Man. Pth šhrb*, *IPth hštrp*, which all derive from Median *xšaθra-pā-van*, and not from OP *xšaça-pā-van*. To my knowledge the OP form continues only as loan words, e.g. Arm. titles *Šahap* and *Šahapivan*, *Cat* 110, 112. These considerations apart, we do not know of any "satrapal" treasury or archives which, none the less, is rendered "royal" by the scholars who have accepted this reading. The oldest reference to such a state or royal archives is made by the Bible, *Azra* 5.17; 6.1, as "the Castle of Treasures" (*byt gnzy*) (where books are kept), an exact equivalent of MP *ganj ī šāhigān*. That the Sasanian learned clergy by the word *šspykⁿ* or *špykⁿ* understood "royal", and not "satrapal", is attested by their substitution of *xwadāyān* for the term, cf. *DkM*, 437.18—20: *gumēg abistāg ud zand ī pad gāw pōstiyānihā ud zarr nibišt ēstād pad ganj ī x^aadāyān dāšt*. "He preserved the Avesta and Zand which were both written in gold on cow hides in the Royal Treasury." The suggestion is supported by a passage of *The Pahlavi Texts*, 85.10, where Wuzurgmīhr ī Bōxtagān states that he deposited his *ayādgār* in the *ganj ī šāhigān*, which shows that this Royal [Palace] Treasury was also used as archives. As an elliptic form *šāhigān* occurs in the *Mādayān ī Hazār Dādestān* nine times in the sense of Royal or State Treasury, which is more often than not modified into *šhsⁿ*. To conclude, our evidence, philological as well as historical, suggests an original *šhykⁿ*, *š³hykⁿ* being gradually corrupted into *šsykⁿ* and by a careless curving of the end of *s*, *šspykⁿ*.

³ Zaehner, *ibid.*, 32: erroneously emends to *ut*; cf. similar correlative prepositions, *az... tā*, Nyb. Mn. II, 89.

⁴ MS *pywk*, thus all scholars who have examined the text. To my mind, it is an evident copyist's error for *pywl*. Apart from the fact that *ān ī yak* is grammatically meaningless, the following sentence 'stating that Tōsar left the rest (i.e. the unauthentic teachings) out of the canon justifies our emendation. Cf. Shaki, *The Sasanian Matrimonial Relations*, *ArOr* 39, 1971, 337, n. 6, where it has already been emended.

⁵ Zaehner, *ibid.*, *ān-ē*, wrong; *ē*, in this context, is an optative verbal element.

*Šābuhr šāhān šāh ī Ardašīrān nibēgīhā-iz ī az dēn bē abar bizišgīh ud star-gōwišnīh⁶ (ud) čandīšn ud zamān ud gyāg ud gōhr (ud) jahišn⁷ ud bawišn ud wināsišn ud jadag-wihērih ud gōwāgīh⁸ ud abāriḡ kirrōgīh ud abzār andar Hindōgān ud Hrōm(ud) abāriḡ-iz zamīgīhā pargandag būd abāz ō ham āwurd ud abāg abistāg abāz handāxt ud har ān ī drust paččēn ō [ō]⁹ ganj ī *šāhīgān dād (an) framūd ud ēstēnīdan ī hamāg *arist (ag)-ān¹⁰ abar dēn māzdēsn ō uskār kard.*

*Šābuhr šāhān šāh ī Hormizdān hamāg kišwarīgān pad paykārišn *yazdān *āhang¹¹ kard ud hamāg gōwišn ō uskār ud wizōyišn āwurd. pas az*

⁶ Nyb. *Mn* I, *ibid.*, emends to *ywmbšnyh. star gōwišnīh*, for the usual *star ōšmurišnīh*, is calqued on Gk. *astrologia* "lit. discourse on stars".

⁷ All other interpreters of the text: *dahišn*. Although some of the Greek teachings on cosmogony and cosmology were adopted by the Mazdeans, (cf. Shaki, *Some Basic Tenets of the Eclectic Metaphysics of the Dēnkart*, *ArOr* 38, 1970, 277–312; id. *A Few Philosophical and Cosmogonical Chapters of the Dēnkart*, *ArOr* 41, 1973, 133–146; de Menasce, *Dk* III; id. *Škand-Gumānik vičār*; Zaehner, *Zurvan*.) in religious matters, they essentially adhered to their own conception of creation. It is rather evident that the term is to be read *jahišn* "accident", in opposition to *gōhr* "substance", in harmony with the other philosophical terms. For *jahišn* "accident" cf. Shaki, *An Appraisal of the Glossary of A Manual of Pahlavi*, *ArOr* 43, 1975, 258.

⁸ Bailey, *op. cit.* 83: *gavākih*, followed by Zaehner, *ibid.*; Duchesne-Guillemin, *La fixation de l'Avesta, Indo-Iranica, Mélanges présentés à Georg Morgenstierne*, 64; reluctantly Boyce, *Zoroastrians, their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, 113, a concept totally discordant to the series of the preceding philosophical subjects; besides, it was logic, not the theory of growth that the Mazdeans took over from the Indians (see *DkM*, 428.10, *tark*, Skr. *tarka*, de Menasce, *Une encyl.*, 27). Nyb., *Mn* II, passes over the term. For *gōwāgīh* "logic" cf. *DkM*, 149 *passim*; de Menasce, *Dk* III, 150; it is calqued on Gk. *logikē* (*texnē*).

⁹ Nyb., *Mn* I, 109: 'L **LH*, untenable in the context.

¹⁰ Zaehner, *ibid.*, *argastān* "school"; Boyce, *ibid.*, cautiously "systems", none of which is attested in MP literature. Molé, *RHR*, 162, 192, n. 3, *a-ristān*, (*a-rist* "celui qui ne se conforme pas à la coutume"), untenable, as *rist*, apparently for *ristag*, does not occur in this sense. Nyb., *Mn* II, 30, *Aryastān* "the country of the Aryans", hardly plausible, as for this we have in MP *ʔyl'nštr*, *Ērānšahr*, whilst in IPth *ʔry'nštr*. The enigmatic word, evidently defective, is, in all likelihood, to be read *a-rist(ag)-ān* "unalloyed, pure [teachings]" which suits the context. For *ristag* [from Av. *irista* "mixed", pppt of *rāš* "to adhere, mix with") "every principle of the material world in a mixed state" cf. Shaki, *A Few Philosophical*, 139, 140.

¹¹ MS *ʔp'n ʔhmk*; Wikander, *Feuerpriester in Kleinasien und Iran*, 114: *āpān-xānak*, suggesting a hypothetical Anāhitā temple built by Šābuhr II. Nyb., *Mn* II, 20, 218, strangely enough, accepts the same reading without comment. One may only wonder how a king could have built a "water house" by disputation with all his subjects! Bailey, *ibid.*, followed by Zaehner, *ibid.*, reads conjecturally **apē-vihānak*, which is hardly satisfactory. From the import of Šābuhr's statement we learn that defending Ādurbād's declaration (*gōwišn*) he tried to convince all the people of his realm (*hamāg kišwarīgān*) of the Ādurbād's only correct version of the Scriptures by disputation (*pad paykārišn*), especially when the passage expressly speaks of his intolerance, in the wake of Ādurbād's clinching controversy, towards all sectaries, hypocrites and heretics. Reading the first term *āhang* "orientation, design, intent", which hardly needs an emendation, the second term easily suggests itself either as a corruption of *yzd'n*, by adding an initial *yōd* and joining the curved end of *p* to *aliḡ*, or *ʔyw* by due emendation — reading *p* as *aliḡ* and the following *yy* as *y*. For *yazdān āhang* "being oriented to god, aligned with the Word of god" cf. *DkM*, 188. 1–4 on freedom and necessity: *meh-sūdih ī aziš abēzagih ī kām-āzād hamāg mardōm ī pad x'adāyih. ī abar xwēš, bē āhangih ī az druz kām ān ī wad-dēn frāz āhangih ī ō dādār kām(ud) weh-dēn*. "The great benefit which ensues from it is the purity of all men of free will owing to sovereignty that they exercise over themselves, turning away from the will of the Druz, from the evil religion, and orientating themselves to the will of god and the Good Religion."; see also de Menasce, *Dk* III. 184. The expression also

bōxtan ī Ādurbād pad gōwišn ī passāxt abāg hamāg ōyšān jud-sardagān¹² ud nask-ōšmurdān-iz¹³ ī jud-ristagān¹⁴ ēn-iz guft ku nūn ka-mān dēn pad stī¹⁵ de dīd kas-iz ag-dēnīh bē nē hilēm wēš abar tuxšāg tuxšēm¹⁶ ud ham-gōnag kard.

im bay Xosrōy šāhān šāh ī Kawādān čeōn-iš ahlamōyīh ud sāstārih spurr-^{}hamēstārihā wānīd pad paydāgīh az dēn andar har ahlamōyīh (i) 4 pēšag āgāhīh ud uskārīšn ī gōkānīg wasihā bē abzūd ud ēn-iz pad gēhān¹⁷ hanjamanīh¹⁸ guft ku rāstīh ī dēn māzdēs n bē dānist ōšyārān pad uskārīšn ōstīgīhā tuwān pad gētīg bē ēstēnīd.¹⁹ ud abartar abzōnīg ud pēš-xrad²⁰ būd(an) mādayān nē pad uskār(i)šn bē pad abēzagīh ī menišn ud gōwišn ud kunišn ud weh mēnōg hāzišnīh²¹ ud mānsrīg abēzagīhā yazišnīh ī yazdān šāyēd. u-mān Ohrmazd mōwbed ān [ān]²² x^{*}ānd x^{*}ānēm kē mēnōg wēnišnīh andar amāh ^{*}paydāgēnīd.²³ u-mān ^{*}frahang-čārihā²⁴ mēnōg wēnišnīh gētīg handāzag nimāyišnīhā-iz har 2 ēwēnag spurīg azišān x^{*}āst x^{*}āhēm. abāg-iz ān ī aziš²⁵ āzādīh kardārīh ī yazdān wāspuhragānīhā abar ērān rāy Ērānšahr pad hammōg ī az dēn māzdēs n frāz raft ī pēšēnīgān hangad dānāgīh āmezišn ī ō-z ham X^{*} anīrah. ān ī āgāhān*

occurs in DkM, 442.6—7: *abē-āhangīh* (MS ^{phnngyh}) ī az wināh(ud)frāz āhangīh ō kerbag “non-orientation (having no design) to sin and having intention to do good deeds”. The alternative suggestion, *ēw-āhang*, occurs as a philosophical term “having no choice, lit. having one intent” [cf. *ēw-āhangīh* = necessity, in opposition to *āzād-kāmīh* = freedom of the will]; cf. DkM, 187.5—7: *ud čim (i) dādār āzād-kām ud nē ēw-āhang kardan ī mardōm ōstīgān kardan ī-š x^{*}ēš spāh mardōm pad xwadāyīh*, “And the reason for god’s making man endowed with free will and not with one (determinate) design is to make him steadfast in lordship over his own army of men.” (cf. Tavadia, *ZII*, B. 8, 1931, p. 121, and de Menasce *Dk III*, 183, both with slightly different translations). Although in our text *ēw-āhang* may be taken as “having one design (to adhere to one true religious teaching)”, *yazdān-āhang* suggests itself the more likely reading on graphic as well as semantic grounds.

¹² Nyb., *Mn II*, 227, *yuvat-sritak* “text not handed down [in common traditional way]”, hardly convincing, see Shaki, *An Appraisal*, 262.

¹³ MS *nnsq*, evidently for *W nsk*; Bailey, *nask*; Zaehner, *nivēk*, wrong; Nyb. *Mn II*, *ibid.*, *nō(k).nask*, wrong; cf. Shaki, *ibid.*

¹⁴ Better *rastag*, cf. Shaki, *A Few Philosophical*, 138—140; id., *Iran ancien*, *Actes du XXIX^e Congrès international des Orientalistes*, 1975, 52—54.

¹⁵ MS *sty*, Zaehner, *gētēh*.

¹⁶ Noteworthy are occurrences of cognate object-verb constructions in this passage. *abar tuxšāg tuxšēm*, *xwānd xwānēm* and *xwāst xwāhēm*.

¹⁷ MS a defective *yh²n* for *gyh²n*; Bailey, *yazdān*, unsatisfactory in combination with *hanjamanīh*; Zaehner, *dēhān*, for which one expects *MT²2n*; Nyb., *Mn I*, 109, emends to *PWN-š²n*, untenable.

¹⁸ MS has the defective ideogram ²LKYNyh [Sum. *ukkin*]; Bailey, *xratīh*, wrong; Nyb., *Mn I*, 143, *ārasanīh*, which in *Mn II*, 29, is explained as *ā-rasan* from *rasīdan*! However, no such verbal derivation is possible in MP or NP.

¹⁹ MS *BR² PWN gytyk² stwt²* for *PWN gytyk² BR² stynyti*! The last word with Zaehner.

²⁰ MS *pyšlht*, Zaehner, *pēš-rat*, wrong, since *rat* is spelt *lt*. With Nyb., *Mn I*, 110, ^{*}*pyšlht*, attested by DkM, 415.12; 437.3: *abzōnīgīh ud pēš-xradīh*.

²¹ MS *w²zšnyh*, thus Zaehner; Nyb., *Mn I*, 110; Boyce, *ibid.*, 133, “inspiration”, a strained sense.

²² Zaehner, *ān(i)[ān]*; Nyb., *Mn I*, 110, *ZK(Y)ZK*, syntactically incorrect.

²³ MS *pyt²kyhst²*, thus Zaehner and Nyb., *Mn I*, 110. However, the logical subject, *kē*, requires an active voice.

²⁴ MS *plh²n č²lyh²*; Zaehner, *frāxv-(vi)čārihā*, hardly convincing; with Nyb. *Mn I*, *ibid.*

²⁵ Zaehner reads *āpīh* and omits.

*pad judtariḥ paykār nēst aōn wasihā abistāg ēwāzīg pad abēzag gōwišnīh nibēg payrāyišnīg az mādayan ayādgārīh ud payrām-iz ēwēnag ēwāzīg andar gōwišn āgāhēnišn dāšt ēstēd. pas-iz hamāg xānīg dānāgīh ī dēn māzdēsñ ēd-iz rāy ī-mān šnāxt ēstēd ku ka hamāg warōmand²⁶ ud uskārīšnīh ī bēgānag az dēn māzdēsñ (ī pad)²⁷ gēhān ō ēd gyāg rasēnd pad nōg handēšišnīh²⁸ ud uskārīšnīh bēgānag az dēn māzdēsñ and dānišn ayāftan ud paydāgēnīdan ō sūd ud wišādkārīh²⁹ ī *gētīgān āwurd nē šāyēnd čand andar ošmurišn ī rad-ē pad wēš wizōyišnīh ud wēš uskārdan (ba)-wād.³⁰ abardom x^aāyišnīhā framāyēm hammis mōg-mardān ī wēnāg ud ertar huxēmtar ud weh nōg nōg asūdagihā abistāg ud zand uskārdan ud ayābišn ī aziš ō dānāgīh ī gēhānīgān arzanīgihā abzūdan. ōyšān kē gētīgān ō šnāxtan ī dādār ud abdīh (ī) mēnōgān čēōnīh ī dahišn az dādār fradom ayāftan nē šāyīdan ayāb hamāg ayāftan šāyīdan guft pad [pad] kam dānišn waranīg. ōyšān kē paydāgīh ī az dēn astīh^{30a} ud pad-iz hangōšīdag ast ī šnāxtan šāyīdan guft pad uskārgar ud ān kē rōšn nimūdan pad dānāgīh dēn āgāhīh dāstan, ud az ān čēōn har dānāgīh bun dēn hammō (g) pad nērōg ī mēnōgīg ud ham pad paydāg[īh]ēnīdārīh gētīgīg ān ī kas dānāgīhā guft kà-z-iš az kadām abistāg paydāgīh hamist nē dāšt ēg-iz pad paydāgīh ī az dēn hangārd kē x^aēškārīh pad hammōg frāz ō (g) ēhān zādagān burd.*

Translation

Dārāy, son of Dārāy, commanded that two written copies of all Avesta and Zand, even as Zoroaster had received them from Ohrmazd, be preserved; one in the Royal Treasury, and one in the Fortress of Archives.

Walaxš, descendant of Aškān, commanded that a memorandum be sent to the provinces (instructing them) to preserve, in the state in which they had come down in (each) province, whatever had survived in purity of the Avesta and Zand as well as every teaching deriving from it which, scattered throughout Ērānšahr by the havoc and disruption of Alexander, and by the pillage and plundering of the Macedonians, had remained authoritative,³¹ whether written or in oral transmission.³²

His Majesty Ardašīr, the king of kings, son of Pābag, acting on the just judgement³³ of Tōsar, demanded that all those scattered teachings to be brought to the court. Tōsar assumed command;³⁴ he selected those

²⁶ MS *wyl^awmnd*, emended, with Zaehner.

²⁷ Zaehner, adds (hač).

²⁸ MS *hndšñnyh* for *hndy^a*; Zaehner, *avēčīšnīh*, with a quotation mark.

²⁹ MS *wyš^atklyh*; Zaehner, *nihātkārīh*, wrong; cf NP *gošāyeš* "relief."

³⁰ With Zaehner.

^{30a} MS *ytwnyh, ēdōnīh(?)*; apparently *YT-yh*, with Zaehner.

³¹ Zaehner, *ibid.*, 8; Boyce, *ibid.*, 94: "Authoritative oral tradition [transmission], whereas the adj. qualifies the oral as well as the written Mazdean precepts.

³² The first paragraph is Zaehner's and the second Boyce's with slight difference.

³³ Zaehner, *ibid.*, followed by Boyce, *op. cit.*, 103: "following Tansar as his religious authority".

³⁴ Zaehner, *ibid.*, followed by Boyce, *ibid.*: "T. set about his business"; Nyb., *Mn* II, 129: *apar matan* "to appear"; On the idiomatic verbal phrase *abar madan* "assume command, superintend, supervise, come upon" cf. Shaki, *Sas. Mat. Rel.*, 337, n. 6.

which were trustworthy, and left the rest out of the canon. And thus he decreed: "[From now] on [only] those are true expositions which are based on the Mazdean religion,³⁵ for now there is no lack of information and knowledge concerning them.

Šābuhr, the king of kings, son of Ardašīr, further collected the non-religious³⁶ writings on medicine, astronomy, movement, time, space, substance, accident, becoming, decay, transformation, logic and other crafts and skills which were dispersed throughout India, Rome (i. e. the Byzantine Empire) and other lands, and collated³⁷ them with the Avesta, and commanded that a copy be made of all those [writings] which were flawless³⁸ and be deposited in the Royal Treasury. And he put forward for deliberation the annexation of all those pure³⁹ [teachings] to the Mazdean religion.⁴⁰

Šābuhr, the king of kings, son of Hormizd, induced all countrymen to orient themselves to god⁴¹ by disputation, and put forth all oral traditions for consideration and examination. After the triumph of Ādurbād, through his declaration put to the trial by ordeal (in disputation) with all those sectaries and heretics who recognized (studied) the *Nasks*,⁴² he⁴³ made the following statement: "Now that we have gained an insight into the Religion in the worldly existence, we shall not tolerate anyone of false religion, and we shall be still more zealous." And thus did he do.

His present Majesty, Xosrōy, the king of kings, son of Kawād, after

Tavadia, *Sprache und Literatur der Zarathustrier*, p. 48, has come close to the correct sense of the phrase by translating *abar mad* "siegte". From this verbal phrase derives the compound *abarmad* "supervision", *DkM*, 407. 10.

³⁵ Zaehner followed by Boyce, *ibid.*: "The interpretation of all the teachings from the Mazdayasnian religion is our responsibility", where *frāz ō amāh* means either "admissible to us", or stands elliptically for (*az nūn*) *frāz* ... which seems preferable.

³⁶ Zaehner; Boyce, *ibid.*, 113: "writings from the religion"; cf. already West, *SBE*, *PT*, IV, 414, correctly "distinct from religion".

³⁷ Zaehner: added. It is highly unlikely that the orthodox Zoroastrian priests, who at this time held heated controversy on the purity and authenticity of the traditionally transmitted Avesta, would have tolerated the addition of non-religious teachings, and what is more of foreign origin, to their Holy Writ: see the Appendix.

³⁸ i.e. in conformity with religious precepts; Zaehner: "a fair copy of all of them be deposited".

³⁹ lit., unmixed principles.

⁴⁰ Zaehner; Boyce, *ibid.*: "he examined [the possibility] of bringing all systems(?) into line with Mazdayasnian Religion"; untenable.

⁴¹ Zaehner; Boyce, *ibid.*, 118: "summoned men from all lands to an 'unprejudiced(?) disputation!' See n. 11. The sentence may as well be translated: "... rendered all countrymen god-ward (*yazdān āhang*)"; or "... induced the countrymen to have one single design (*ēw-āhang*)", which is less plausible.

⁴² Zaehner, wrong; Boyce, *ibid.*, 118, has come close to the point of the sentence but for a few oversights. It should be borne in mind that in this essentially legal sentence *bōxtan* = "acquittal, triumph", [relig.] "redeem, redemption", and *gōwišn* = "statement of claim, declaration", cf. A. Perikhanian, *Sasanidskij sudebnik (Mātakdān ī Hazār Dāstān)*, Yerevan, 1973, s.v. Boyce unwarrantedly connects the preposition *abāg* with *bōxtan* "triumph ... over", whereas, *abāg* refers to the Ādurbād's implied "disputation" [*paykārišn*] "with" the heretics, etc. Thus Boyce translates: "After the triumph of Ādurbād, through his tested utterance, over all those of different groups, schools(?) and sects..."

⁴³ i.e. Šābuhr II.

he had put down heresy and evil dominion⁴⁴ with the fullest antagonism, according to the revelation of the Religion he greatly promoted detailed knowledge and investigation in the matter of all heresy within the four estates.⁴⁵ And at an assembly (of the representatives) of the realm⁴⁶ he declared: "We have recognized the truth of the Mazdean Religion; and the wise can with confidence establish it in the world by discussion. But being a bounteous propagator (of the faith) and foremost sage⁴⁷ lie, essentially, not so much in discussion than in the purity of thought, speech, action, the guidance of the Good Spirit and worship of gods, paid purely in conformity to the holy Word. And, verily, we shall call⁴⁸ those persons Ohrmazd mōbed who have made it possible for us to gain an insight into the Ideal (*mēnōg*);⁴⁹ and we shall emphatically demand of them⁵⁰ both kinds of perfect knowledge through education: insight into the *mēnōg* as well as into the extent of its appearance as the material world.⁵¹ In conjunction with that⁵² we give thanks to gods, especially for the Iranians,⁵³ that as a result the realm of Iran took to the course indicated by the teachings of the Mazdean Religion, that is, a synthesis of the accumulated wisdom of our forerunners (intended) for the whole of X^wanīrah. There is no dispute with the religious authorities as regards their contraventions, for already (enough) knowledge has been accumulated in the Avestan language through pure oral traditions, writings arranged in books and memoranda and traditions (transmitted) in the

⁴⁴ West, *op. cit.* 415, n. 4, aptly notes: Referring to his extirpation of the heresy of Mazdak.

⁴⁵ The interpretation of the sentence depends on whether we insert between *ahlamō-yih* and 4 *pēšag* an *izāfa* or a *wāw*; and in view of the co-ordinate phrase *āgāhū ud uskārīšn* having reference to both *ahl*^c and *āgāh*^c, such an emendation is necessary. However, the whole text being concerned with religious rather than social issues, an *izāfa* seems more fitting.

⁴⁶ See n. 17.

⁴⁷ Zaehner; Boyce, *ibid.*, 183: "effective and progressive propaganda".

⁴⁸ Zaehner; Boyce, *ibid.*: "What the chief Magians of Ohrmazd have proclaimed, do we proclaim", not having appreciated the cognate object — verb construction *x^wānēm*, imparting stately emphasis.

⁴⁹ Zaehner; Boyce, *ibid.*: "for among us they have been shown to possess spiritual insight"; see n. 23.

⁵⁰ Zaehner: "we have asked and ask of them!"; Nyb., *Mn* II, 221: "and what they the mōbeds will, we also will!" improperly for *azišān x^wāst xwāhēm*; see n. 48.

⁵¹ Zaehner: "with of that which concerns spiritual insight and of that which deals with conduct on earth": Nyb., *Mn* II, 140, also takes improperly *gētīg handāzag nīmāyišnihā-iz ... spurīg* "perfect as far as measured by earthly measure", see Shaki, *An Appraisal*, 259.

⁵² Zaehner unwarrantedly joins the sentence beginning with *abāg-iz ānī* to the preceding one and translates: "and for this we give thanks to the gods." On the prepositional phrase *abāg-iz ān ī* "in conjunction with that" see *Mādayān ī Hazār Dādestān*, *passim*, where the phrase introduces numerous juridical sentences. Bartholomae, *ZsR*, I—V, and Perikhanian, *op. cit.*, *passim*, have likewise failed to appreciate its meaning.

⁵³ Zaehner: "Fortunately for the good governance of the country..."; for *wāspuhragānīhā* "especially" see Henning, *The Survival of an Ancient Term, Indo-Iranica*, *Mélanges présentés à Georg Morgenstierne*, 95—97; Shaki, *Two Middle Persian Legal Terms for Private Property, Mémorial Jean de Menasce*, 325—336. Moreover, *ērān* as against *Ērānšahr*, in this context, means "the Iranians", not *Īrān*, the country.

vernacular of the commonalty [to justify our convictions). Furthermore, the reason why we have attempted to recognize all sources of the knowledge of the Mazdean Religion is that if (now) all dubious considerations, foreign to the Mazdean Religion (which are) in the world, reach this place, (we shall know that) further deliberation and examination [of these expositions], foreign to the Mazdean Religion, cannot bring so much acquisition and exposition of knowledge beneficial and propitious to the people of the world as the study of a *rad* [could contribute] through increased investigation and deliberation. With ardent desire [therefore] we decree that all clear-sighted, most noble, most honourable and good mōbeds should zealously and ever afresh examine the Avesta and Zand, and thereby worthily enrich the wisdom of the people of the realm with the results of their attainments.

Those who maintain that human beings⁵⁴ cannot apprehend, or that they can comprehend in its entirety, the nature of the creator, the wonders of spiritual beings and the quiddity of the primeval creation, proceeded from the creator, are to be regarded as men with little desire for knowledge.⁵⁵ Those who hold that it is partly possible to apprehend Being through the revelation of the Religion and through inference by analogy, are to be held seekers [for truth] [thinkers]. And those who throw (new) light [on religious precepts] are to be deemed wise and proficient in the Religion. And since the root of all knowledge is the teaching of the Religion, both in its potentiality, which is spiritual, and its manifestation, which is material, should he, who speaks wisely, present (his knowledge) to men all over the world by reason of his proper function in regard to the (religious) teaching, his utterance, then, ought to be considered an exposition of the Avesta, even though he has not had it from any revelation of the Avesta.

Appendix

abāz handāxtan = "compare with, collate"

The students of Pahlavi have long been divided apropos of the interpretation of the polysemous verbal phrase, *abāz handāxtan*, in Middle Persian texts concerning the history of the Avesta and the adoption of foreign teachings by the Zoroastrians. The phrase has been tentatively interpreted by the scholars either as "collate, compare" or "add, unite, incorporate". To the proponents of the former view belong West, who took it "collate with", *SBE, PT, IV*, 414, and Molé "comparer avec", *Oriens* 13–14, 1961, 5ff. On the other hand the majority of authors have followed Bailey, *ZP*, 81, who has proposed "unite with", cf. Zaehner, *ibid.*, 8, "add to"; Boyce, *Handbuch d. Orientalistik*, I. IV 2. 1968, p. 37; id. *Zoroastrians, op. cit.* 113, "add to" with a quotation mark; de Menasce, *Dk III*, 379,

⁵⁴ On *gētīgān* see Nyb., *Mn II*, 82, "terrestrial beings"; Zaehner, *ibid.*, 9, "subjects" — rather stained.

⁵⁵ Zaehner, *ibid.*: "men of insufficient intellect and free-thinkers", an arbitrary translation.

"colliger"; Nyb., *Mn* II, 94, "unite with", but "collating with" for *andar handāčišn ī ō*, *ibid.*, and "the act of bringing back to" for *apāč handāxtārīh ō*, *ibid.*: Duchesne-Guillemin, *Indo-Iranica*, *cit.*, 64, "réunir"; Shaki, *Some Basic Tenets*, *cit.*, 277, "re-incorporation".

In order to decide between these two widely diverging proposals it is necessary to examine the pertinent passages in which our term occurs in parallel contextual patterns and with identical semantic function. Before proceeding any further it should be noted that *handāxtan* as a simple verb occurs in several senses as "measure, judge, project, compute, compare, allot (destiny)" and its derivatives *handāzišn*, *handāzag* as "comparison, simile, analogy, similitude, extent, measure", etc., but never in the sense of "add, unite" or in the sense of "throw, hurl", as it appears in its subsequent semantic shift in NP. Even as a loan word such a sense is not attested, cf. Arm. LW *andačem*, *endačem* "prove, examine", Arab. LW *hindāz* "measure", *hindaza* "a measure of length", *handasa* "geometry, engineering", cf. also NP *andāze* "size, measure, analogy, comparison". Thus, semantically there is no justification for a conjectured meaning as "add, unite" for the simple form of the verb.

As to the complex forms of the verb we produce below four passages all of which attest our proposal.

Text I

DkM, 406.10—16:

*hufraward Ādurfarrōbag ī Farroxxādān ī hudēnān pēšōbāy būd ān paččēn ī kustagīhā pargandag būd nōg abzār az pargandagīh abāz ō hamīh ud dīwān ī-š dar āwurd. andar nigērišn ud handāzišn ī ō weh-dēn abistāg ud zand ud pōryōtkēšān gōwišn hangōšīdag *payrōg ī az ān brāh abāz kard.*

Translation

The blessed Ādurfarrōbag, son of Farroxxād, the (religious) leader of the people of the Good Religion, by new effort again brought that dispersed copy, which was scattered in various regions, together arranging it into an archive and chapters. By examining and collating it with the Avesta and Zand of the Good Religion and the oral tradition (transmitted) from the first teachers of the faith, he restored⁵⁶ it like a ray from that brilliance.⁵⁷

The text explicitly states that A. F. restored (*abāz kard*) the collected corpus of the Dēnkard by examination and *handāzišn* with the Scriptures; from which it follows that *handāzišn* as an element of the hendiadys (*nig° ud han°*) may only denote "comparison or collation". Otherwise it would evidently be absurd to assume that the restoration of a book could be achieved by adding or annexing it to another.

⁵⁶ lit. remade.

⁵⁷ Menasce, *Dk* III, 380, partly ill-considered.

Text II

DkM, 428, 14—20:

*kāl*⁵⁸ *kōšāk*⁵⁹ (*kāla koša*) ī *Hindōg* ud *Magistīg*⁶⁰ ī *Hrōmāyīg*⁶¹ ud *abārīg* ī az *ān šōn abāg bun nibēg* ī *pad ganj* ī *šāhīgān*⁶² *ōh handāxt*⁶³ ud *čē andar-šān wirāyīšn*(ig) ud *abāg čim ō x^aāstārān* ī *ham āgāhīh* *ōh nimūd*. *nibēg-šān* ī *warōmand*⁶⁴ *nōg ārāst ān* ī *čē az bē kišwar āwurd ē nigerīd* ud *ē wizōst* ud *frāz nē hišt nigōnīh* ud *bēgān[ān]ag nāmīh rāy nē kam pa-dirift*.

Translation

He collated the *Kāla Koša*⁶⁵ of the Indians and the *Megistē* of the Greeks and other [writings] of that sort with the fundamental book [i.e. the Avesta, the Scriptures] which was in the Royal Treasury; and whatever in them were adaptable [lit., adjustable] and reasonable he presented to the respective seekers of that knowledge. He revised [lit. re-arranged] those of their writings which were dubious, and deliberated and examined that which he had brought from foreign lands, and did not neglect them nor any the less adopted them because of their inferiority and foreign name.^{65a}

As it will have been observed from the above, the Zoroastrians, having been censorious of everything foreign, must have considered all foreign teachings dubious [*warōmand*], wherefore they subjected them to minute examination and consideration, in other words, collated them with the Scriptures before they adopted them and presented them to the learned men at large.

Text III

DkM, 406, 3—6:

ōy bay Ardašīr, šāhān šāh (i) *Pābagān* (abar)⁶⁶ *mad ō abāz ārāstārīh* ī *Ērān x^aadāyīh*. *im nibēg az pargandagīh ō yak gyāg āwurd* ud *pōryōtkēš ahlaw Tōsar* ī *hērbēdān hērbēd būd abar mad* ud *abāg paydagīh* ī *az abistāg abāz handāxt* az *ān paydagīh bawandagēnīdan framūd* ud *hamgōnag kard*.

⁵⁸ MS *g^l* for *k^l*, Skr. *kāla* "astronomie planétaire", de Menasce, *Une encyl.*, 27.

⁵⁹ MS *kwš²k*, Skr. *koša*, recognized by West, *Grundriss* II, 93.

⁶⁰ MS *mgsty²k*, Gk. *Megistē*, Arab. *Al-Mağistī*, see Bailey, *ZP*, 83

⁶¹ MS *hlwm²y* for *hlwm²yk*.

⁶² MS *špyk²n'*, see above n. 2.

⁶³ MS *hnd²hhtn*, for *hnd²ht'*.

⁶⁴ MS *wyl^o* for *wl^o*.

⁶⁵ Skr. *kāla koša* [lit. treasury of astronomy] seems to have been a book on astronomical science.

^{65a} Zaehner's translation, *ibid.*, 139, is untenable.

⁶⁶ MS *mtn'* for *mt'*; without amendment it may mean "came (into power)", however, on the analogy of *abar mad* in connection with the ascendancy of Tōsar, such a reading seems preferable.

Translation

His Majesty Ardašīr, the king of kings, son of Pābag, assumed command {gained ascendancy} for the restoration of the kingdom of Īrān. He collected this book which was in a state of dispersion.⁶⁷ And Tōsar, the ancient teacher of the faith, the righteous, who was the chief hērbed, assumed command and collated it with the exposition of the Avesta, and commanded that it should be made perfect⁶⁸ on the basis of that same exposition; and thus did he do.⁶⁹

In this text *bawandagēnīdan* {lit. make perfect, i. e. expurgation or purifying from doctrines or teachings incongruous with the Mazdean precepts} of the collected folios of the Dēnkard (*nībēg*) on the basis of the revelation of the Avesta [*az ān paydāgīh*] is consequent upon *abāz handāxtan* of the collected materials with that same revelation. It is, however, evident that expurgation on the basis of an standard text cannot result but from collation.

Text IV

DkM, 406.20—407.9; MS DH, fol. 252 r, 11—21:

ud az ān pas Ādurbād ī Ēmēdān ī hudēnān pēšōbāy az yazdān sōbārišn⁷⁰
⟨ud⟩ dēn māzdēsna ⟨ud⟩ jahišn ayārīh⁷¹ nōg abzār pad x⁷²āyīšn ud wizōyīšn ud
ranj ī wēš im nībišt čē az ān wisāndag⁷² ud sūdāg ud uzrūftag⁷³ ud xāk-
āmēy diwān abāz windād. ud ēd čē az abāz griftagīh⁷⁴ ud burdagīh ud
*triftagīh abāz āwurd aziš wizid *humat⁷⁵ mēnōg hampursagīh⁷⁶ ud xrad*
ayārīh pad abāz handāxtārīh ī ō pōryōtkēšān ī pēšēnīgān gōwišn ud kar-
dag ⟨ud⟩ abistāg paydāgīh [ud] abzōn ī az weh-dēn dānāgīh daraqīhā
padiš ārāst. ud rastagēnīt⁷⁷ bām-ē ī az payrōg⁷⁸ ī ān brāh ī az rōšnīh ī bun
rōšn ud hamistīhā kard pad weh-dēn nimūdārīh ēn ī nāmēnīd pad stūrīh
mānāgīh ī az ān wuzurg bun dēnkard 1000 darag.

⁶⁷ lit. brought... to one place.

⁶⁸ i.e. free from fault.

⁶⁹ See also de Menasce, *Dk III*, 379—380.

⁷⁰ MSB (*DkM*), *swb²lyh*; MS K, 43v 5 and DH, fol. 252.12 *swb²lšn*.

⁷¹ MSS *hdyb²lyhšnyh*; Nyb., *Mn I*, 112: *hdyb²lyh(yh)šnyh*, for the correct *yhšn hdyb²lyh*.

⁷² Nyb., *Mn II*, 214, *visānik*, wrong; see Shaki, *An Appraisal*, cit. 282.

⁷³ MSS *wzlwptk¹* (*²wz⁰, with Nyb., *Mn II*, 199, who compares it with Man. Pth *pdrwb¹*, *pdrwft¹* "to throw into disorder").

⁷⁴ Nyb., *Mn II*, 20: *apāč kartakīh* "undone", implausible. He compares it with NP *bāz kardan* "to demolish".

⁷⁵ MSS *mtk¹* *myng*; Nyb., *Mn I*, 112: *mtk¹* **mgwny* (...**magūnē*, pl. cas. obl. of *magu*, "Magian", *Mn II*, 112). To my mind, in accordance with the parallel *xrad ayārīh* the corrupt words may be emended to *⟨*hw*⟩*mt¹* *mynwg* (*hampursagīh*). The other corrupt word of *DkM*, 411, 22, misread by Nyb., *Mn I*, 108, 11, and *Mn II*, 112, as *magūnē* is, in fact, a part of *mgwg-GBR²* torn apart and misplaced as *g-GB²(²wzw²n)* *mgw R²* ((²wzw²n)*mgwg-GBR²* "the language of the Magians".

⁷⁶ MSS *oyk* for *oyh*.

⁷⁷ MSS *lstkyny¹*, Nyb., *Mn I*, 112, 18, unjustifiably *lys⁰*; on these see Shaki, *A Few Philosophical*, cit. 138—140.

⁷⁸ *DkM*, *ptylk¹*; so Nyb., *Mn I*, 112; DH, *pylk* for *ptlw¹* "payrōg"; see Shaki, *Some*

Translation

And, after that, I, Ādurbād, son of Ēmēd, the leader of the Mazdeans, by god's instructions,⁷⁹ with the help of the Religion and good fortune, with new effort, desire, investigation and great pains wrote this (book) from whatever I found from that dilapidated,⁸⁰ worn out,⁸¹ disordered and dust-covered archive. And from whatever I recovered from the pilferings,⁸² abstractions, and stolen (leaves) I made selections with the council of the Spirit of *Good Thought, the help of wisdom,⁸³ and by collating them with the oral tradition and dogmas⁸⁴ [transmitted] from the ancient teachers of the faith and the expositions of the Avesta. And I arranged them into chapters as an addition to the wisdom of the Good Religion. And I, thus, arranged [it as] a beam from the ray of the brilliance which was from the light of that fundamental light (i.e. the Avesta). And I compiled this (book) called Dēnkard of one thousand chapters (to remain) as a lasting⁸⁵ trust⁸⁶ from that lofty source, as an exposition of (a guide to) the Good Religion.

That the term *abāz handāxtārīh* ō in this context also denotes "collating with" hardly needs further argumentation. The perspicuous import of the context itself eliminates the possibility of any interpretation other than collation, comparing, since the selection of genuine or correct texts obviously cannot be made by adding the collected material to other writings, but rather by comparing them with authoritative sources.

In fact, our fundamental text does suggest that a copy of every expurgated adopted work (*har ān ī drust paččēn*) had to be deposited in the Royal Treasury, and that all their pure teachings (**arist(ag)ān*) be affixed to the wisdom of the Good Religion (*ēstēnīdan ī hamāg *arist(ag)-ān abar dēn māzdēsn ō uskār kard*, DkM, 413, 1–2). However, the concept of "annexation" is expressed here by *ēstēnīdan*, not by *abāz handāxtan*. As all beneficial knowledge was considered by the Mazdeans to have been originated from the Good Religion (*har dānāgīh bun dēn*, DkM, 414, 21), its adoption, therefore, was regarded as a contribution to the Mazdean wisdom, which meant by no means an addition to the Avesta or its exposition. To this the philosophical and astronomical chapters of the Dēnkard and the Bundahišn bear witness.

Basic Tenets, cit. 280, n. 26; de Menasce, Dk III, 380, "pērōk".

⁷⁹ On *swb'īšn*, "advice, directions", cf. Nyb. Mn II, 177; Henning, BBB, 115, *srwbr* "Lehrer".

⁸⁰ lit. destroyed, separated (*wisāndag*); de Menasce, Dk III, 380, "triste", Nyb., Mn II, 214: reluctantly "given up".

⁸¹ Menasce, Dk III, *ibid.*: *démoli*.

⁸² Menasce, *ibid.*: "reprises".

⁸³ Menasce, *ibid.*: "par la sagesse qui consulte".

⁸⁴ On *kardag* "orthodox law, established institution, dogma, etc." see Shaki, *The Social Doctrine of Mazdak in the Light of Middle Persian Evidence*, ArOr 4, 46, 1978, pp. 291–292.

⁸⁵ Menasce, *ibid.*: "ressemblance"; Nyb., Mn II, 125: "similarity".

⁸⁶ On *stūrīh* "Substitute [successorship, marriage], trust", see Shaki, *The Sasanian Matrimonial*, cit. 325–326; Perikhanian, *op. cit.* 524. Menasce, *ibid.*: "filiation fictive"; Nyb., Mn II, 181: "tutorship".